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Chicago Tribune

BUSINESS

WEDNESDAY

MAY 18, 2005

Lake Shore plan has superstar air

Developer bringing in Spanish architect

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Already home to projects by such star architects as Frank Gehry, Rem Koolhaas and Helmut Jahn, Chicago may be about to add another international superstar to its list: Spanish architect and engineer Santiago Calatrava.

Calatrava, known for his lyrical, structurally expres-

sive buildings and bridges, is expected to unveil a residential high-rise design for a prominent North Lake Shore Drive site on Tuesday, people close to the project said.

The developer for the project, these sources confirmed Tuesday, is the Fordham Co. Its portfolio includes Near North Side luxury high-rises such as the Fordham and the Pinnacle, as well as the Gold Coast midrise known as 65 E.



New York Times photo

Santiago Calatrava of Spain designed the planned \$2 billion World Trade Center transportation hub in New York.

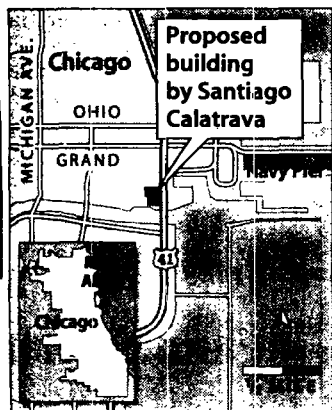
Goethe. Calatrava's modern forms would mark a strong departure from these traditional buildings.

Fordham is buying two sites, located on the west side of the drive along the north bank of the Chicago River, sources said.

Current zoning would allow for two towers: a 540-foot high-rise on the slip and a 350-foot structure along the river.

It is not known whether Calatrava is being hired to design one or both of the pro-

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posed towers.

A Fordham spokesman declined to release drawings of the project or provide details.

The hiring of Calatrava for the high-profile residential project would mark a key shift in the current building boom, with a local developer bringing in an outside "starchitect" for a major residential project.

Typically, such projects have been designed by Chicago firms. The 92-story Trump International Hotel & Tower, for example, is by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill of Chicago.

Calatrava's expansion of the Milwaukee Art Museum, which opened in 2001 and features a sunshade that opens like the wings of a bird, has drawn thousands of visitors from Chicago and its suburbs. The design, Calatrava's first American building, anticipates the architect's

planned \$2 billion World Trade Center transportation hub. Its above-ground portion will resemble a great bird that has alighted on a plaza.

Other recent Calatrava projects include the roof of the Olympic stadium in Athens and the Olympic velodrome.

Last year Calatrava was named by the American Institute of Architects as the winner of its Gold Medal, the institute's highest individual honor. The Gold Medal recognizes an individual whose body of work has had an enduring impact on the theory and practice of architecture. Previous recipients include Frank Lloyd Wright and Louis Kahn.

To make Calatrava's Chicago project possible, Fordham would buy the sites from a joint venture of luxury condominium developer LR Development Co. and Virginia investment firm JER Partners.

About a year ago the venture bought the two sites and another one nearby, paying \$37 million. Terms of the deal with Fordham could not be determined, but the joint venture was asking \$65 million for the sites Fordham would buy, sources said.

Thomas Weeks, LR's president, declined to comment, except to say that LR and JER are

in active development on another site, located just west of Lake Shore Drive between Grand Avenue and Illinois Street.

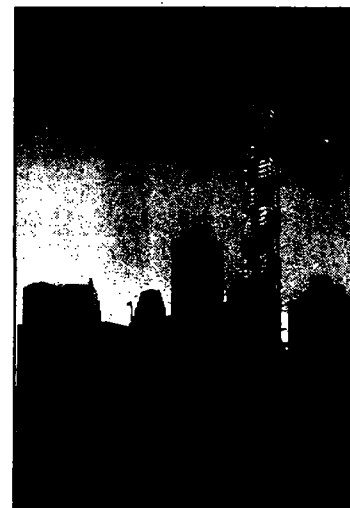
Christopher Carley, Fordham's chairman, and Calatrava, who has offices in Zurich and New York City, could not be reached for comment.

The Chicago project would not be Calatrava's first major American high-rise commission. Last year he made public a design for a Lower Manhattan residential tower, near the Brooklyn Bridge and the South Street Seaport, that would consist of stacked "glass cubes" located on either side of a concrete core. The project, known as 80 South Street, won raves from architecture critics and public officials. It has yet to begin construction.

Calatrava is no stranger to Chicago. Several years ago he designed two pedestrian bridges that would have spanned Lake Shore Drive, connecting Buckingham Fountain and the lakefront. But city officials shelved the design, though they never explained why.

Although Calatrava later met with Mayor Richard Daley, he chose not to enter the city's design competition, held last year, for five pedestrian bridges along the lakefront.

In recent years Chicago has



New York Times photo
Rendering shows Calatrava's design for a New York residential tower that would consist of stacked "glass cubes" on either side of a concrete core.

added several high-profile projects by distinguished international architects.

Gehry designed the Jay Pritzker Pavilion at Millennium Park, which opened last year. In 2003 the Illinois Institute of Technology opened a campus center by Dutch architect Koolhaas and a dorm by Jahn, who is based in Chicago.

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